

A World Of Flavors Emanates From Cook And Bake Center

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MAMARONECK- The warm aroma of baking chocolate chip cookies fills one room while the soft fragrance of Indian spices rises in the other.

That contrast is just one morning at the Cook and Bake Center, a kitchen-for-rent where chefs, cooks and bakers with small businesses whip up their creations. Over the course of a week, a world of flavors emerge from the restaurant-quality convection ovens, 10-burner stove and 40-gallon steam kettles.

"That's where the magic comes," Janine Goldentaier, owner of the center, said near one of the kettles.

"The jams and jellies and salad dressings. And hot sauces."

At that moment, the kettle held 75 pounds of potatoes and 10 pounds of peas, plus spices for samosas made by Nirmala Gupta of Yorktown

Heights, whose Bombay Emerald Chutney Co. boasts authentic Indian food. The stuffed pastries and spicy, but not too hot, said Kamal Gupta, Nirmala's husband, who helps with the business.

"Even a kid can eat them," Kamal Gupta said, watching as his wife worked in the kitchen with four assistants. She also makes five chutneys ranging from a mild plum version up to the mint chutney, which Nirmala Gupta described as "South Indian spicy."

The Cook and Bake Center, 360-C Mount Pleasant Ave., at the edge of Mamaroneck Village's downtown, is the kitchen where some of the foods found in specialty stores, farmers markets and Whole Foods begin. In all, chefs, cooks and bakers from some 40 businesses use the kitchen and its stainless steel, chef-worthy equipment at a cost of \$22 an hour for a minimum of four hours, Goldentaier said.

Every day is different, she says. Sweetie Jo's organic chocolate chip cookies are made there. Deb's Farmhouse Kitchen fills the place with 150 pounds of gluten-free granola a week. Salad dressings, Italian

biscotti and African hot sauce also spring to life under its roof.

"When you're a small business, you don't have the money to buy all the equipment," said Priscila Consiglio, 31, of Hartsdale, production manager for Harrison-based Sweetie Jo's, who was baking tray after tray of chocolate chip cookies with newly hired assistant Kim Maddock, 23.

No one has to tell Deb Magdalin how hard it is to find a good place to cook. To make her Deb's Farmhouse Kitchen granola and brownies, she spent "the better part of a year" asking restaurants, diners, bakeries, tea shops and even pizzerias if there was any downtime in their kitchens, day or night, when she could cook.

"For most of us, it would not be feasible to create a business like this without her kitchen," said Magdalin, of Greenwich, Conn.

The Cook and Bake Center was started a couple of years ago, after Goldentaier, a chef with French training, stopped working as a caterer and chef in Manhattan and Westchester and went into business in the community where she lives. It took more than a year to set up the 1,000-square-foot space and obtain all the certificates and approvals she needed. But she's happy there.

"No more running to the city, no," she said. "This is my town. I'll stay here."

With her training, she can help people develop recipes, showing cooks and bakers ways to make gluten-free versions of their foods, for instance.

"Gluten-free tastes good if you know how to do it," she said

She can arrange to have helpers there, and she did for the Guptas. That's a good thing, because Goldentaier has enough equipment to cook plenty of food.

"You can cook for an army," she said.